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REVIEWS OF BOOKS

GENERAL BOOKS AND BOOKS OF ANCIENT HISTORY

Men of the Old Stone Age: their Environment, Life and Art.

By HENRY FAIRFIELD OSBORN, Sc.D., Ph.D., LL.D., Research Professor of Zoölogy, Columbia University. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1915. Pp. xxvi, 545.)

ANYONE who has made a serious study of the problem of man's antiquity cannot fail to be impressed by its complexity. By reason of this complexity, its avenues of approach are many. Professor Osborn has approached from the side of the zoölogist, the palaeontologist. In the preface he frankly confesses that he is in no sense an archaeologist; and that his volume represents the work of many specialists. This co-operative feature should prove to be one of the chief merits of the work, and is an example worthy of imitation.

The task set by the author is a synthesis of the results of geology, palaeontology, anthropology, and archaeology. The time factor in prehistory can only be drawn from a great variety of sources: climate, geography, fauna and flora, and the mental and physical evolution of man. In fact there are no less than four ways of keeping prehistoric time: that of geology, palaeontology, anatomy, and human industry, the most delicate chronometer being that afforded by human industry—in other words archaeology.

The plan of the book is not unlike that of other recent works on the same general subject; and the conclusions drawn are for the most part in harmony with one of the dominant European schools. Geographically it is confined to the Old World, and almost wholly to Europe; it has crystallized largely about a summer's trip through the cave regions of France and Spain, in which the reviewer likewise had a share. While not limited rigorously to the men of the Old Stone Age, the men and stone ages of the New World are not touched upon.

In late Pliocene times the human ancestor is supposed to have emerged from the age of mammals and entered the age of man, the event marking, in other words, the beginning of prehistory. The attitude is erect and the opposable thumb already developed. The anterior centres of the brain for the storing of experience and the development of ideas are still rudimentary, which is probably true of the power of articulate speech. Penck's minimum of 525,000 years in round numbers is accepted as the length of time that has elapsed since the beginning of the Quaternary or Pleistocene epoch. The Trinil race (*Pithecanthropus*) lived near the beginning of this epoch. The question whether

the skull cap and the femur belong to the same individual or even genus is left open; as is likewise the question of the position of *Pithecanthropus* with respect to our direct ancestral line of descent.

The oldest known race of man, that represented by the Mauer jaw (*Homo heidelbergensis*), is given a place in the next to the last interglacial stage (Mindel-Riss), which is in agreement with the general consensus of opinion. This race is looked upon as the ancestor of the Neandertal race, being more primitive and powerful as well as more ape-like. According to the author's time scale, *Homo heidelbergensis* lived some 250,000 years ago.

Regarding the age of the Piltdown man, the author's opinion runs counter to that of some well-known authorities, who consider *Eoanthropus* to be as old as the Heidelberg man. In fact the name chosen—"dawn man"—would suggest an even greater antiquity for Piltdown. But Osborn synchronizes *Eoanthropus dawsoni* with the last interglacial stage (Riss-Würm), thus giving him only half the antiquity of *Homo heidelbergensis*. He further believes that the Piltdown race was not related in any way either to the Heidebergs or to the Neandertals; neither was it directly ancestral to any other races of the Old Stone Age, or to any existing species of man. In other words it "represents a side branch of the human family which has left no descendants at all". This is rather disconcerting to those of us who would be glad to claim as a remote ancestor one with such high-bred cranial contours, and who see in Piltdown a very suitable stump to which to attach a family tree.

The author's reasons for rejecting *Eoanthropus* are no doubt based on the Piltdown lower jaw; but Miller's recent convincing demonstration that this jaw belongs to a fossil chimpanzee and not to the Piltdown skull would seem to place the latter once more in the running for direct ancestral honors. Restorations of *Eoanthropus*, therefore, based on the supposition that the skull and mandible of Piltdown belonged together, are faulty: they also emphasize the fact that in the making of restorations there is always present the danger of overstepping the legitimate boundaries of scientific presentation.

One need not linger long over the author's interesting and ample treatment of the better-known archaic Neandertal race, which outstayed its time on the stage, finally making a rather hasty but very effective exit. In its place there came the upper palaeolithic races referred to by the author as Crô-Magnons, and who in his opinion first overran Europe between 25,000 and 30,000 years ago. He does not believe that the negroid Grimaldi race ever became established in Europe as a contemporary of the Crô-Magnons.

The last races of the Old Stone Age were the broad-headed and narrow-headed races of Ofnet. With the broad-headed type are correlated the races of Furfooz and Grenelle, as well as the existing Alpine brachycephals; while the narrow-headed type resembles the modern

"Mediterranean" type of Sergi. The Old Stone Age racial factors are effectively summarized graphically by means of a tree showing the main theoretic lines of descent.

Interwoven with this story of the successive races is a fund of information bearing on the contemporary faunas and their influence on the course of human progress. This is a subject upon which the author is peculiarly fitted to speak with authority, and in these features the merits of the work reach their highest level.

To the specialist the treatment of the culture stages, although possessing genuine merit, is not quite so convincing. At times there is apparent a tendency to pronounce the final word on controverted questions. This tendency is borne of an enthusiasm which comes of traversing new fields of unusual interest; an enthusiasm which possesses the virtue of being contagious, whatever may be its faults, for no one can deny the attractiveness of the presentation.

The author has been especially generous in the matter of illustrations, which are notable alike for the care with which they have been selected, their number, and their general excellence. All points considered, *Men of the Old Stone Age* outranks any other work on that subject hitherto published in the English language, and is thus assured of a wide field of usefulness.

A History of Babylonia and Assyria. By ROBERT WILLIAM ROGERS, Ph.D., D.D., LL.D., F.R.G.S., Professor in Drew Theological Seminary. Sixth edition. In two volumes. (New York, Cincinnati: The Abingdon Press. 1915. Pp. xxvi, 542; xix, 609.)

ROGERS'S *History of Babylonia and Assyria*, which appeared in 1900, has been often reprinted. Since its appearance great advances have been made in Assyriological study, notably for the early Assyrian period through the excavations of the German Orient Society at Asshur, for the early Babylonian period through the exploration of Susa by De Morgan and Scheil, for the late Babylonian or Chaldaean period by the work of the German Orient Society at Babylon, and for all periods by the important researches of a score or more of independent investigators. The result of these advances is that a book published fifteen years ago is at many points no longer abreast of the times.

The new edition is enlarged nearly one-half. In externals (type, form, binding, etc.) there is no noticeable change, except the increase in bulk. The general division of the material, and the titles of the several books, are also unchanged. Volume I. is devoted to book I., Prolegomena, with thirteen chapters. Eight of these treat of travel, exploration, and excavation in Babylonia and Assyria, and of decipherment of the inscriptions. A chapter of twenty-three pages on the script and languages of the inscriptions is new. The other chapters are on the sources, the lands and peoples of Babylonia and Assyria, and